

REMARKS

Claims 1, 7 and 13 have been amended to better define the invention and claims 20 and 28 have been cancelled without prejudice.

Rejections over Bezos

Claims 1-9, 11, 13, 15, 17-19 and 21-27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 6,029,141 to Jeffrey Bezos et al. ("Bezos").

Bezos teaches an Internet-based referral system that may enable individuals and other business entities to market products, in return for a commission, that are sold from a merchant's website. The system includes automated registration software that runs on the merchant's website. Hypertextual catalog documents may be distributed via the website. The site may include marketing information about the selected products. Customers may link to the merchant's website to purchase the products. A shopping cart allows the customer to select products from multiple different websites and then perform a single check out from the merchant's site. If a customer purchases the products from the merchant's site, a commission may automatically be credited to an account of the referring individual or business entity.

Conversely, the claims recite a computer-implemented method, computer program or computer system for developing a dossier for a proposal. Bezos does not teach or suggest the claimed features as amended, including a method, program or system that arranges "information in the dossier into expandable nodes which expand into subnodes, the expandable nodes being arranged according to categories of people, topics, clients, documents and projects." The information used for the dossier is found during searches, "wherein the dossier comprises information relevant to the selected industry, the client and the proposal, and further comprises information concerning experienced people, prior documents, and past projects pertaining to the proposal."

For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of claims 1, 7 and 13 be withdrawn. Claims depending from claims 1, 7 and 13 include all of the features of these claims plus additional features. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection to claims 2-6, 8-9, 11, 15, 17-19 and 21-27 also be withdrawn.

In addition, Bezos does not teach or suggest features of claims depending from claims 1, 7 and 13. Claims 2 and 8 recite presenting an alternate list of industries not associated with the client. The rejection cites Bezos, col. 1, lines 62-66, as teaching this feature. The passage discusses referral links, in which the associate's catalogue documents have product-specific hyperlinks to allow potential customers to link to the associate's Web-site to initiate purchases of these products. This passage discusses products associated with an associated merchant, but there is no teaching or suggestion of an industry, a list of industries, or an alternate list of industries not associated with a client. Thus, Bezos does not teach or suggest the features of claims 2 and 8. For at least this additional reason, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection to claims 2 and 8 be withdrawn.

Rejections over Bezos in view of Mielenhausen

Claims 20 and 28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 6,029,141 to Jeffrey Bezos et al. ("Bezos"), and further in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,529,911 to Thomas Mielenhausen ("Mielenhausen"). Claims 20 and 28 have been cancelled, but features related to the nodes and subnodes recited in these claims have been added to the independent claims.

Mielenhausen teaches a data processing system for organizing, analyzing, recording, storing and reporting research results. The data processing system may define structural and functional relationships between separate data structures for research projects, propositions related to each research project, and authorities related to the research projects. A sequence of process steps in which the user's identification, information related to each research project, information related to each proposition, and information related to each authority may be input. Reports may be output displaying information associated with each proposition and the information associated with each authority.

Neither Mielenhausen nor Bezos, alone or in combination, teach or suggest the claimed arranging of "information in the dossier into expandable nodes which expand into subnodes, the expandable nodes being arranged according to categories of people, topics, clients, documents and projects."

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For at least the above-identified reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the application be allowed. If for any reason, the Examiner believes that an interview would be helpful to resolve any remaining issues, she is invited to contact the undersigned attorneys at (312) 321-4200.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Vincent J. Gnoffo". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

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